Mubarak village yet to get legal status

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI, Jan 1: Mubarak village, a centuries-old fishermen settlement, 20 kilometre from Hawkesbay bordering Balochistan, is yet to be recognized as a regular settlement.

Residents claim that they had not so far been granted any documents recognizing their ownership rights on their land and no layout plan had been prepared for its development by any agency.

They fear that like some other fishermen villages, it would also one day either vanish or declared unauthorized settlement after their ejection by some development agency.

Comprising a population of 10,000 and few hutments, the village is surrounded by the Arabian sea and a mountainous terrain and is a source of attraction for tourists who visit Hawkesbay.

It is indeed an irony that this village with a beautiful landscape has been denied all basic facilities such as water and electricity supply despite the fact that the Hub dam, the Hubco power station and KNUPP are close to it.

There is only one primary and secondary school for boys and one ghost primary school for girls. Even these are victims of neglect because of lack of maintenance for years.

Despite the fact that the village is sited near the Arabian sea, there is no jetty for fishermen where they can anchor their small boats. Because of stormy sea for four months in a year, they are unable to go for fishing and have to remain jobless, hence deprived of an income.

The village has been facing an acute shortage of water for the last few months due to indifference on the part of the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED). The village is supplied water through a water tanker under an arrangement between the community and the PHED.

The tanker has not been operating for the last six months and residents have often to visit nearby villages for a bucket of water.

The underground water of the village is not fit for human consumption, a PHED official admitted and suggested that the village be linked to the distribution system of the Hub dam reservoir, or the water resource of the recently-launched Beach Avenue scheme of the LDA, or to the water supply line of KNUPP.

Besides, the road linking the village to the main Hawkesbay Road is, too, in a dilapidated condition and only one bus operates between Karachi city and the village.

The village is dependent on Karachi city for its daily provisions of life. The villagers complained that they had to travel to Karachi city, 46 kilometres from the village, for treatment of ordinary ailments in private hospitals which were too expensive for them.

Because of extreme poverty and non-availability of basic needs, a large number of villagers have moved to nearby areas of the city.

Residents have also expressed concern over the inordinate delay in the construction of a dispensary in the village. The project had been approved during the previous PPP regime.

They urged the Sindh government to direct the authorities concerned to pay attention to the development of their village and take immediate steps to provide basic amenities to them.